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INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA
Organizational session
26-29 January 1993

REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE FOR THE ELABORATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THOSE COUNTRIES EXPERIENCING SERIOUS DROUGHT AND/OR DESERTIFICATION, PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA, ON THE WORK OF ITS ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Opening of the session

1. The organizational session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, was held in New York from 26 to 29 January 1993. The meeting was convened in accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 47/188 of 22 December 1992 entitled "Establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee for the elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in those countries experiencing serious drought and desertification, particularly in Africa".

B. Election of officers

2. The Bureau of the Committee, as elected at its 1st meeting, on 26 January, was as follows:

Chairman: Mr. Bo Kjellén (Sweden)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. René Valéry Mongbe (Benin)
Mr. T. P. Sreenivasan (India)
Mr. José Urrutia (Peru)

Rapporteur:*

C. Adoption of the agenda

3. At its 1st meeting, on 26 January, the Committee adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of the Bureau
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
3. Adoption of the provisional agenda for the first substantive session
4. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its organizational session.

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* The election of a Rapporteur was postponed to the first substantive session.

D. Attendance

4. Representatives of the following States attended the session:

Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

5. The following United Nations organs and bodies were represented:

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office.

6. The following specialized agencies were represented:

International Labour Organisation, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank, World Meteorological Organization, United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

7. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented:

Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, Commission of the European Communities.

8. The following non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council was represented:

International Chamber of Commerce (category I).

E. Documentation

9. The documents before the Committee at its organizational session are listed in annex I to the present report.

II. TRUST FUND AND SPECIAL VOLUNTARY FUND

10. At its 4th meeting, on 28 January, the Committee held a discussion on the Trust Fund and the Special Voluntary Fund. During the discussion on this item, many Member States announced their voluntary contributions to the Special Voluntary Fund for the participation of developing countries, as well as to the Trust Fund for preparatory activities. Those Member States that were not in a position to announce their contributions indicated their intention to do so as soon as their internal procedures would permit.

11. The Chairman urged Member States to do their best to contribute to the two Funds in a timely fashion so as to enable the Secretary-General to discharge his responsibilities efficiently, particularly with regard to the participation of developing countries, as well as the preparatory activities of the Secretariat.

III. CONSIDERATION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

12. The Committee considered the provisional agenda for its first substantive session at its 4th and 5th meetings, on 28 and 29 January.

13. At the 5th meeting, on 29 January, the Committee approved the draft provisional agenda for its first substantive session, as contained in document A/AC.241/L.2/Rev.1 (see annex II).

IV. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE

Rules of procedure

14. At its 4th meeting, on 28 January, the Committee adopted its rules of procedure, as contained in document A/AC.241/2 and amended in document A/AC.241/L.3. (The rules of procedure, as adopted, were subsequently issued in document A/AC.241/3.)

Subsidiary organs

15. At its 4th meeting, on 28 January, the Committee decided to establish two working groups to assist in its work.

16. At its 5th and 6th meetings, on 29 January, the Committee elected the following officers of the working groups:*

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* The specific working group on which the elected officers will serve will be determined at the first substantive session.

Chairman: Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaf (Algeria)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. Morad-Ali Ardeshiri (Islamic Reupblic of Iran)

Rapporteur: Mr. Frederick E. G. Mallya (United Republic of Tanzania).

17. At the 6th meeting, the Committee agreed to postpone the election of the remaining officers of the working groups to its first substantive session.

Schedule of meetings for future sessions

18. At its 4th meeting, on 28 January, the Committee decided on the following schedule of meetings for its future sessions:

(a) Sessions to be held during 1993

24 May-3 June 1993 (Nairobi)
13-24 September 1993 (Geneva)

(b) Sessions to be held in 1994

17-28 January 1994 (New York)
21-31 March 1994 (Geneva)
Early June 1994 (Paris)

V. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

19. At its 6th meeting, on 29 January, the Committee adopted the draft report on its organizational session, as contained in document A/AC.241/L.4, and authorized the Bureau to finalize it by incorporating therein the proceedings of the 5th and 6th meetings.

Annex I

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AT ITS ORGANIZATIONAL SESSION

Document symbol	Agenda item	Title or description
A/AC.241/1	2	Provisional agenda for the organizational session
A/AC.241/2	2	Draft rules of procedure of the Committee
A/AC.241/3	2	Rules of procedure of the Committee
A/AC.241/L.1	2	Note by the Secretariat on the schedule of meetings for future sessions
A/AC.241/L.2 and Rev.1	3	Note by the Secretariat on the adoption of the provisional agenda for the first substantive session
A/AC.241/L.3	2	Proposed amendments to the draft rules of procedure
A/AC.241/L.4	4	Draft report of the Committee on its organizational session

Annex II

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST SUBSTANTIVE SESSION

1. Organizational matters:

   (a) Adoption of the agenda;

   (b) Organization of work.

2. Sharing of technical information and assessments, including the following elements:

   (a) Desertification, drought and the global environment;

   (b) Causes, general extent and consequences of land degradation in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid areas;

   (c) Social and economic dimensions;

   (d) Pattern of bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes;

   (e) Experiences with international, regional, subregional and national programmes to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in developing countries;

   (f) Experiences of developed countries;

   (g) Some possible elements of a new strategy to promote sustainable development in countries experiencing drought and/or desertification.

3. Elaboration of an international convention to combat desertification in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa.

4. Review of the situation as regards extrabudgetary funds:

   (a) Special voluntary fund to support the participation of developing countries affected by drought and/or desertification, particularly the least developed countries;

   (b) Trust fund for the negotiating process.

5. Adoption of the provisional agenda for the second substantive session.

6. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first substantive session.